THE FOURTH DAY.

21st February 1918.

The Assembly met at 11-45 A. M. on Thursday, the 21st February 1918.

47. Agricultural Education.

Mr. J. Kamalam (Member, T. I. C., Attungal) first spoke about the importance of agriculture in the development of the material resources of the State and the necessity for giving a vocational side to the present system of education by the introduction of agricultural education. The suggestions of the Member were (1) to make the present generation of farmers more efficient by diffusing among them a knowledge of the scientific principles underlying agriculture and (2) to give the farmers of the future, *i. e.*, the school-going population of the present day, a sound training in agricultural science and practice.

Dewan's reply.—The Director of Public Instruction has already been asked to send up a scheme of Agricultural Education in consultation with the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries.

43. Adoption of measures for increasing the food supply of the State so as to meet the local demand by improving and extending paddy cultivation.

Mr. K. Thomman Dominic (Member, Peermade taluk) urged the necessity of increasing the output of paddy and gave statistics of the import of paddy and rice for the past three years. The best way of meeting the situation was by expanding the area under paddy. It was gratifying that better methods were being introduced in *punja* cultivation. If *punja* and *cherikal* lands could be cultivated annually, the quantity of paddy for local consumption would be largely increased. Recently, Government threw open for paddy cultivation 2,000 acres of swampy lands from forest reserves. That was a most commendable step. But larger areas of a similar nature were still available in the forest reserves. All such tracts should be thrown open for registry after inspection by a Committee consisting of the Conservator of Forests, the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries and the local Dewan Peishkar.

Dewan's reply.—Noted. I may inform the Member that I have myself seen some of the Reserved Forests. The expert opinion on the subject—and this is the view I also formed after my inspection—is that it will be prejudicial to the interests of the forests, if *all* lands which *may* be suitable for cultivation are set apart for the purpose.

49. Need for investigating the continued failure of paddy crops and scarcity of drinking water in some parts of Edanad.

Mr. K. N. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, T. I. C., Padmanabhapuram) submitted that, though the Kodayar Irrigation scheme had benefited some portion of Edanad, there was in it a tract of land, 35 square miles in area with a population of about 40,000 who paid Rs. 20,000 as tax, which was not only unirrigated but was totally neglected. The chief occupation of the people in that tract was jaggery industry which, for several reasons, had almost died out. The only other industry was agriculture. Two other industries in which the people could be engaged with profit to themselves and benefit to the State, *viz.*, the monazite and fibre (palmyra), had passed into the hands of foreigners. The only other industry remaining to be taken up was mica.

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